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A Voice *of the* Hills

JOHN W. GORDON

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Oh lake! a light of olden skies
Is on thy surface shining;
A glory and a splendor lies
Around thy shores undying.

(P. 67)

A VOICE OF THE HILLS

A Voice *of the* Hills

Poems by

John Warren Gordon

Barre, Vermont

1917

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TO MY WIFE.

How oft you plied the pruning book
With eager purpose to improve
Until the sense would be more clear
And smoother would the numbers move.

And if the merit still be small
No fault attaches to your part,
For to the reader I confess
The fault lies in the writer's art.

—J. W. G.

PROEM

WE vainly wish that they were better–
These products of our idle hours–
That they were true in line and letter
As are the stars and vernal flowers.

But not to all the gift of song
That rises to the height of art,
That can from age to age prolong
The music of the human heart.

But simple songs may have a charm
Denied to more pretentious lays;
Some plants that gentle heat will warm
Would wither in a tropic blaze.

No reader with a critic's eye
Should waste his time upon these pages;
To win his praise we did not try
Nor shall we sorrow if he rages.

So here they are—our waifs of fancy–
No thunderous line to stun the ear,
No witching, rythmic, necromancy,
No tragic word to draw a tear.

SAMUEL DE CHAMPLAIN

BENEATH the thatch, beside the salty marsh,
Where daily bread was daily task,
Where Fortune's frowns were stern and harsh
And small the gifts that peasants ask,

There one of Nature's noblemen was born,
Whose heraldry should be his deed,
Whose mind to high emprise was borne,
Whose hand should plant an empire's seed.

In ev'ry deed he chose the nobler part,
And none e'er saw his courage lag
And whiter were the lilies of his heart
Than were the lilies of his flag.

Oh France! Could you have seen, as we can see,
The wonders of the lands he trod;
What peoples, cities, states were yet to be
On what you thought was worthless sod,

You might have won the struggle with the Saxon
Your heart to-day might thrill to see,
In place of Stars and Stripes, or Cross and Dragon,
The lilies of your Fleur de Lis.

VERMONT

YOUR western border is a lake,
Your eastern is a river;
Your name from hills of green you take
That are a joy forever.

No ocean pours upon your lands,
The wealth of distant havens;
But mountains are your lifted hands
For bounty of the heavens.

Let others boast their sunny climes
And rich and broad plantations;
We choose your season's changing rhymes
And beautiful mutations.

The sultry winds that move the palm
Where day and night are equal
N'er wake the northern pine-tree psalm
Where spring is winter's sequel.

THE PLEASURES OF THE ANGLER

WHEN birds sing best and meadows bloom,
When trees are list'ning to the brooks
And waters leap the rocks in foam,
The anglers seek sequestered nooks,
Supplied with bait of worm or fly,
With silken line and springing pole
That reach where speckled beauties lie
In running stream and crystal pool.
In patient watch they sit and wait,
In meditation's happy dream,
Disturbed by nibbles at the bait
Or by the voices of the stream.

These voices are a joyous thing;
Upon the ear they louder grow
Till all the air and landscape ring;
Then blend in music soft and low.
At times a note is sharp and clear,
So real it seems, you glance about
To see what friend is standing near
And finding none are left in doubt.
The waters laugh at your surprise
And chatter onward through the lea,
Repeating oft in human guise
The note that startled you and me.

What memories these voices wake
Of days when all the world was new,
When woodland, mountain, stream and lake
Encircled all the sports we knew,
Before the arrows made a wound,
Before we sought the heights and deeps,
Or grass was green upon the mound
Beneath whose sod a playmate sleeps.

Ah! What a symbol of our life
The stream that glistens as it flows!
Against the rocks it beats in strife
Or frets 'neath Winter ice and snows.
Then out it flows in sunny June
To feed the roots of grass and flower
And sing its merry Summer tune
From morning light to vesper hour.
Twixt life and death, a silver thread
That stretches through the verdant land
From mountain source to Ocean bed,–
A wonder wrought by Nature's hand.

And all the stars above it pass
And pause to see their image there,
For beautiful in the liquid glass
The jewels of the night appear.
The same to-day as yesterday,
It hurries onward to the sea;
The same tomorrow as to-day,
A changeless change its destiny.

To scenes like these the angler turns
And leaves the fretting world behind
To seek amid the flowers and ferns
The joys that Nature has refined.

Today our poet stands in granite mold,
So weel and deftly wrought by loving hands;
But half the good he did is still untold;
In song he worketh yet in all the lands.

(P. 20)

AMO

I LOVE the poet's song,
Sung on the evening air,
Whose lips the bee hath stung
And left its honey there.

I love the sculptor's hand,
Who carves a dream in stone
And beautifies the land
With forms that we have known.

I love the painter's brush,
Adorning wall and dome,
That brings the heart to hush
In the corridors of Rome.

I love the hero's name
Who died to make us free
And won immortal fame
Upon the land or sea.

I love the great and good,
Whose steps we fondly trace,
Whose hearts were understood,
Whose works have blessed the race.

I love the hearth of home
Where kindly faces meet,
No matter where I roam
I thither turn my feet.

BURNS*

AND it was Robbie Burns who sang so sweet
Of lovely Ayrshire braes and Bonnie Doon;
All of the melodies of song did meet
To swell the chorus of his lyric tune.

Alike to him the rose and thistle grew,–
The daisy and the mouse were noble theme;
Twa Dogs, philosophers as wise and true
As those who delve in classic learning's stream.

Of rant and cant the strong and certain foe,
As keepers of Twa Herds fu' well can tell,
And quackish Doctor Hornbrooks well may know
Upon whose shams his arrows thickly fell.

The deil, like sin, a brunstane roasting got
That left him sair as Tam O'Shanter's mare;
'Twas worse by far, since Angel Michael's shot,
When hosts on heavenly plane were 'gaged in war.

*Read in accepting the Burns' monument for the City of Barre.

As moralist, oft-times sagacious, true,–
To him our pleasures were like poppies spread,
Like river-melted flake or rainbow hue,
Like flowers seized, or flitting light that's fled.

He gave the highest place to woman fair;
He told us how that Nature first made man
With 'prentice hand, and then, with greater care,
She made the lassies on a better plan.

Lang, lang as hearts shall know the tender flame
And body make a body laugh or cry,
The tongue shall not forget the singer's name
Who sang the song of "Comin' Thro' the Rye."

When age shall whiten beard and bend the form,
And friends of youth their place must soon resign,
In Simmer's sultry heat or Winter's storm,
The voice shall con the lines of Auld Lang Syne.

When auld companions, on life's further slope,
Recall the canty days of long ago,
They'll walk with firmer step and brighter hope
Remembering "John Anderson, My Jo."

When titled lords look down on kith and kin,
Despising hoddin gray and simple samp,
As if the common wore the badge of sin,
We'll know the rank is but the guinea's stamp.

In every patriot's veins for aye shall burn
The Godlike praise that Highland heroes won
For doughty deeds at bloody Bannockburn,
When Edward's day of tyranny was done.

And Scotia's grandeur stronger yet shall spring
From prayerful scene beneath the Cotter's roof
And every clime and age shall joy to bring
Its praise and laurels as affection's proof.

Oft fortune was severe, but sad or gay,
Aboon the ills o' life he wore a smile
That makes the world rejoice to bless the day
And hour "There was a lad was born in Kyle."

To-day our poet stands in granite mold,
So weel and deftly wrought by loving hands;
But half the good he did is still untold;
In song he worketh yet in all the lands.

His deed was broader than a plan or book:
"For Puir Old Scotland's Sake" he sang a song
And earth and sky a fresher glory took,
As over all his light shone bright and strong.

Still flowers bloom beside the Bonnie Doon,
The heather sweetly grows on Highland brae;
Unchanged as these as cycles forward run,
Shall be the songs that gladden us today.

We take the gift that you so freely give;
Be thankit for the purpose and the art;
His nobler thoughts you'll make us better live,
His name shall be a truer treasure of the heart.

A MEDLEY
on the
VERMONT SENATE OF 1910

WE beg your pardon while we sing
Not of a knight or prince or king,
But of the men who gathered here
And breathed this Chamber's atmosphere.
We'll box the counties in our rhymes
And sing the praise of Good Old Times,
When thirty men assembled here
And asked no odds of any year.
Whate'er was wrong we tried to shun,
Whate'er was right, was quickly done.
Our labor is a wonder yet
To those who know the worth they get.
We labored near a hundred days
And twisted laws a thousand ways,
Just as the greatest artists do
Until our work, like theirs, was true.

'Twas not by many laws enacted,
We won our legislative bays.
Alike for evil ones rejected
We should receive a people's praise.
For laws, like books, are weariness
To flesh, if freely multiplied.

A few that rest on righteousness
    Will serve a State and be its pride.
That all our statutes were wise ones
    Is not the honor that we claim,
But as the current wisdom runs,
    We did deserve a decent fame.
That some good laws were left unpassed,
    Is not a wonder or surprise;
Some will remain unto the last
    For men to fashion and revise.
But as the years shall come and go,
    And here shall gather other men,
What better record will they show,
    Than that of nineteen hundred ten?
And that is why we wondered more and more
That people never thought of us before.

Our strong point was variety,
    We were of various shapes and sizes,
No matter what the show might be
    We had a subject for the prizes.
We had extremes of both the lean and fat,
Our President and Vice were proof of that.
Some eyes were grey and some were brown or blue
But each could pierce a statute through and
    through.
Here white hair crowned an honored head,
While other heads were topped with black or red.
All knew their part and kept each Senate rule,
Though David said the writer played the fool.

BOXING THE COUNTIES

LAMOILLE County showed its usual spunk,
And sent us Pike, not fashioned out of punk.
His brevity commended what he said,
And none were wrong, who followed where he lead.
From Franklin, aptly named from him
Who stole the lightning of Almighty Jove,
Came Shepardson and Sheldon, short and slim,
Whose work the sane and sober will approve.
And Griswold was the member from Grand Isle,
Where sky and land and water laugh and smile.
His pleasant face bespoke his habitation
Amid the isles that are the gem of all creation.

From Caledonia came Dave and Darling,
A goodly pair, though Dave was sometimes snarling.
He monkeyed mostly with the Normal Schools,
And said the world was made of him and fools.
The Doctor thought his trade was underpaid,
"We ought to raise the price of pills," he said,
"Naught else could rid the world of sinners faster,
Nor pestilence, nor famine, nor disaster."
Dave thought so too, and said, as I remember,
He'd try a pill upon a certain member
And if it proved an efficacious pill
He'd vote with all his heart to pass the bill.
Just who his victim was, he indicated, –
I was the one he wished was medicated.

From Windham came a Butler and our Adams,
Their depth of wisdom measured by the fathoms;
One tried to make the railroads advertise,
One never could have lost a paradise,
One ripe in years, one skillful at a trade,
And both can claim a useful record made.

From Windsor came a trinity of sages,
A banker, lawyer, sheriff, made the three;
So versed were they in wisdom of the ages
That from our modern errors they were free.
One had a sweetly face, one never smiled,
The banker never showed that he was riled.

From Chittenden a trio came,
We called them, Norton, Max and Smith;
No witch could choose a better name,
Than one of these to conjure with.
Max built an inn and tried to make us think
He should be given rights to sell a drink.
We listened to his argument and facts
And said he might if he would pay the tax.
So 'tis that in the City by the Lake
You'll find there's something for the stomach's sake.

From Addison, where flows the Otter Creek,
Came two, though one was never known to speak.
But there's an ancient proverb of the race
That silence golden is in any place.

We knew his face concealed no sin or liquors,
Though it was nearly hid behind his whiskers.
The other loved a horse, as well as song,—
A gentle man whom we shall treasure long.

The Essex Senator was very dignified
And thought that every question had a doubtful side.
He doubted much the wisdom of the income tax
And could not see that it agreed with him or facts.
The temperance laws, he tinkered, mixed and mussed
Until his colleagues fidgeted and cussed,
And yet so worthy was his labor and his powess
That in four years he jumped the State for Congress.

From Bennington, there came a steady pair
That worked the evener with contented air.
A fleece of white adorned the Cushman head,
While Archibald's was decked with auburn red.
Why hair should differ when the men agreed
Is unexplained by Harry Daniel's creed.
What one might think, the other never doubted,
Alike in thought, alike they always voted.
So both were right or wrong in every case,
But right or wrong they ran a goodly race.

From Orleans came a Butterfield and Taplin
Tall timber each, for neither was a saplin'.
One was a veteran of the Civil War,
The other bravely fought the gilded bar.
Both were six feet or more without their shoes,
Which was the better man, 'twas hard to choose.

Old Orange County sent her contribution,
But wished we had a different Constitution,
For though she raised the best of beef and pork,
She never could domesticate the stork.
Her loss of population left her one,
Where two had been who always weighed a ton.
For Orange, worthy senators had sent,
Whose energies on better laws were bent.
In State expense had Scribner had his say,
Less fault had been in what we had to pay,
And few the errors that the critic blames
In Seaver's careful scrutiny of claims.

The Senators from Rutland numbered four,
An Orange Senator explained the score:
"Four men created on the Rutland plan
Would barely match an Orange County man."
To which a Rutland member made reply,
"The Eunuch envies those who multiply."
But four they were and made a handy team
To row the boat across or up the stream.
Hitchcock was rarely absent from his seat,
While Barden sought to make a bigger State,

And Clark was deep and wise in lore and law,
And ready to detect a hidden flaw;
His speech was brief, his eyes and hair were dark,
His beard too short to make a patriarch.
He was a pious man who hated sham,
But Rutland habits caught him saying damn.

The bravest of the four in serious battle
Was Rutland's doughty member, Tuttle:
He urged that each should die behind his gun,
But sad to say was first to turn and run.
He wisely chose the ancient hero's way
Who ran away to fight some other day.

From Washington we had a curious set,
Judge Lyford, wise,—smoke that, and don't
forget.
And there was Harry, something out of order,
The most peculiar man within our border.
Whate'er the battle, he was ready with his gun
To shoot at sight, or make us merry with his
fun.
And last the writer, something of an ass,
Of no account or note, so let him pass.

Such was the bunch of thirty men
Whose like will rarely meet again,
And have the right to wonder more and more
Why people never thought of them before.

WHAT THE BUNCH DID

WE tackled every problem with a zest.
For hedgehogs, rats and snakes we did our best.
We gave the people honest weight and measure,
For mileage took a little of their treasure,
Prohibited monopoly and trust,
By laws that made the corporation just.
On bridge and road we spent the public money
Until our acts appeared a little funny.
We vainly tried by statutory force
To hitch a lantern to the farmer's horse.
We tried all ways to carry out our will
But only left the heading of the bill.
We gave the cows a third tubercle test
Then stopped to let the farmer pay the rest.
But as we worked we wondered more and more
Why people never thought of us before.

Among our number, two could lift a lofty strain
With songs that thrilled the heart and lingered in the brain.
As tedious labors ended
Their harmonies were blended.
But where policemen found their hats, they never could explain.

To see two Senators in want and sore distressed
With nothing on their heads, for reasons never guessed,
To be sure, made us wonder more and more
Why people never thought of them before.

Our legislative road, at times a little rocky,
Required all our skill but soon we found a jockey.
When railroad magnets came and asked us for our aid
He boldly took the floor and stumped them to a trade.
He offered boot, but still they let the challenge go,
Perhaps they knew the many scalps that he could show.
And as he worked he wondered more and more
Why people never thought of him before.

And Harry caused a smiling ripple
By asking that we ballot for the people.
He seemed to be impressed, we had forgot,
And only he was "Johnny-on-the-Spot."
And as he worked he wondered more and more
Why people never thought of him before.

The Chairman of Committee on the Normal Schools,
Reported that the dunces needed better stools.

Some laughed, he said they might, he did not
care a rap,
He knew some folk that ought to wear the dunce's
cap.
But some contended Dave had missed his cal-
culation,
That changing stools would never meet the
situation.
But he was firm, he'd have the stools, he would
not budge;
We yielded, let him have a stool and made him
judge.
It was a funny way to drive a man to tipple,
But Harry said 'twas right; a ballot for the
people.
And as we worked, we wondered more and more
Why people never thought of Dave before.

We were a sober crew as ever sailed a ship,
No liquor, hot or cold, had ever passed our lip.
So Senate No. 1, about a licensed inn,
Appeared an open door for gilded, sordid sin.
It sprung a mighty row that shook the Senate
Room
Until the Goddess lost her balance on the dome,
And never since, 'tis said, has felt herself at
home.
Then is it strange we wondered more and more
Why people never thought of us before?

We had another fight (I think it was trustee),
But certainly I know, we never did agree.
We threshed it out in many ways from start to close,
Then put it in a pigeon hole to slumber and repose.
What future fate it had, is not for me to tell,
Nor say the wicked thoughts that wished it back in ——
Will some good member name the word that rhymes with tell?
I can't recall it but I know it has a sulphur smell.
If none of you can aid I know who'll help me out,
The Chaplain can supply a Bible word, no doubt.
So as we fought we wondered more and more,
Why people never thought of us before.

There was another task we had to regulate,
It was to solve the taxing problem of the State.
We passed a bill and sent it over to the House
Where Wisdom slipped around as slyly as a mouse.
They nibbled it as though it were a piece of cheese,
Then bit, threw up the head and swallowed it with ease.
We'd won a victory and all were filled with joy
And felt as when a school has loosened up a boy.
For all would have a uniformity of tax,

We see old Dartmouth Hall, three stories high,
With belfry limned against the northern sky.

(P. 55)

When, lo! as cocks were crowing, fell the veto
axe.
But as we worked we wondered more and more
Why people never thought of us before.

The mount that stands across the river
And looks on Brattleboro's ancient town,
Once had volcanic fires that made it quiver–,
So run the legends that to us come down.
Its fires are dead and all its thunders still,
But in their stead, we have a famous bor-
ough
And if you want a fight that has a thrill
You cannot beat the town of Brattleboro.
We've seen the roaring lions in their cage
And stopped to watch them snap and ramp and
rage,
But for a first class, up-to-date affair,
With Brattleboro, nothing can compare.
Four years ago there met two mighty dragons,
As fierce as those in legends of the Saxons.
Their long blue forms across the land were
drawn,
They fought from light to dark, from dark to
dawn.
They fought for rights of way beside the river,
Their ponderous lunges made the mountains
quiver.
Their rights and wrongs, if any either had,
Were so confused and mixed that all went mad.

Their battle seemed at times a dance or spree
But that it was a sight we all agree.
We tried to arbitrate for all concerned,
But disagreed, did nothing and adjourned.
Some said we'd drawn and sown the dragon's
teeth,
But peace hath come, the sword hath found its
sheath.
So as we worked we wondered more and more
Why people never thought of us before.

My Muse must stop, with many left unsung,
Their work and worth unsuited to a babbler's
tongue.
We've culled the meadows o'er and gathered
weeds
And left untouched the fruit of useful seeds.
The world does thus. The dogs at fight or play
Draw crowds that from a sage would turn away.
The monkey on a pole will get the pennies,
And wise philosophers be counted ninnies.
If by the papers you attain a rank,
You'll find yourself a jail-bird or a crank.
If for the right you stand, a sturdy oak,
They'll laugh and treat you as the latest joke.

IN MEMORIAM [1]

ANOTHER chord we strike, 'tis one of sadness,
Two empty chairs, to-night, must chill our gladness.
Two souls have gone, as true to Duty's call
As any, who have met the fate of all.
Their genial presence, missed by us so soon,
Has left a fragrance, sweet as flowers in June.
We cannot speak the words their spirits might
But we are thinking they would say to-night, –
"Remember us in gladness, not in tears.
"Let merry greetings fill your future years.
"Remember us, but let the symbol be
"The smiling flower, not the cypress tree.
"Your tears will fall to earth and do no more,
"But joy hath wings to reach the other shore."

1. Senators C. and S.

CHRISTMAS

WE love the story of the Nazarene,
Born in a glory, man had never seen.
A star shone on the path the wisemen trod
In seeking for the birthplace of their God.
An angel was the herald of the news:
"A King is born to rule above the Jews!"

The race from which He sprang denied His right,
His claim divine was hateful in their sight.
"A greater one," they said, "would come and reign
And all the earth would follow in his train;
The kings and emperors by men appointed
Would bow before the throne of their annointed."

They persecuted Him Who would redeem,
Who wore, unstained, the robe without a seam,
Who calmed the waves with power from the skies,
Restored the blind and made the dead arise.
By common things He taught and truth revealed
Drew lessons from the lilies of the field,
The empty lamps, the talents that the servant hid,
And feast to which the multitudes were bid.

That he might purge the world of sinful dross
He underwent the passion of the Cross.
He burst the tomb, His persecutors sealed
And immortality to earth revealed.
Although His head had not a place to lie
He went to build us mansions in the sky.

The ages pass, and now we hear again,
The joyous news, heard on Judea's plain,
That glorious message of the Manger's birth
Which shepherds heard,—"Good will and peace
on earth."

A SALUTE*

A MOTHER watched the lorries pass
And saw their banners fly,
Not thinking of a courtesy
From soldiers riding by.

She heeded not the cheering crowd
But stood apart and mute,
When lo, a soldier raised his cap
And gave a glad salute.

And every soldier passing by
Like homage to her paid
Until a thousand gallant lads
Their courtesies had made.

It was a gracious little deed
That lifted half the weight
Of sorrow from a mother's heart,
Torn by a cruel fate.

*Founded on an incident of American soldiers passing through a French city.

It was a tribute to her sons
    Who fell beside the Marne
When German hords were beaten back
    With legions rent and torn.

The lads who doffed their caps had come
    To fight for bleeding France,
To right the wrongs to Belgium done,
    To break a tyrant's lance.

Upon some battle-field these lads
    May win the hero's prize,
But what will match the kindly deed
    Which met that mother's eyes?

PREPAREDNESS

1916

NO matter where you go, sport is the rage
That fills the mind and heart of youth and age.
Our patriot duties now are quickly done
In burning Chinese crackers for our fun
Or watching once a year our eagle sail
While stars fly off a pinwheel on its tail.

For volunteers our country sent her call;
Less came prepared than crowd a college "bowl".
Is there no danger to the home and state,
When we will watch a game while duties wait –
Will boys whom we have taught to bat and kick,
Defend us 'mid the perils black and thick?
We do not doubt that they will have the will,
But will they have the practice and the skill?

No boy should wear the stunted form of toil
Or know too soon life's battle and turmoil;
But still before he reaches man's estate,
He should be taught and trained to serve the state.

We would not banish play; it has a place
To make a happy, strong and vigorous race,
But when it is more sought and prized than
work,
It breeds the fop, the slacker and the shirk.

Greece lost her phalanx, kept her dance
And none were found to meet the foe's advance.
In primal days when hearts were strong and true
Across the world, the Roman eagles flew;
But when the shows of later days enthrall
They perched upon the coliseum's wall.
Oh for a Juvenal to flay our sins,
Lest we forget before decay begins!

JOSEPH A. DEBOER

THE law is written: "Dust to dust returns,"
But noble lives are not enclosed by urns.
The star shines on although its fires are dead
And dark the place from which its rays were
shed.

We stand today beside his lifeless ashes
But in the light that from his spirit flashes.
Few of his mien and make will cross our path
To make our deeds seem scattered aftermath.

His civic worth, his moral dignity,
His clear preceptions, stern integrity,
His happy speech that vocalized his thought,
The constancy with which his tasks were
wrought,

His earnest work in every line of duty,
His mind so well endowed by nature's bounty,
Ideals spread upon a generous plan,–
All make us see God's image in the man.

ON THE DEATH OF A FRIEND[1]

THERE is a veil that covers day,
A darkness that will pass away.
There is a frost upon the glass
Through which the rays opaquely pass.
There is a mist upon the stream
Where sunlight made the crystals gleam.
There is a cloud above the flowers
Where dew is found in morning hours.

How soon the night will turn to day
And all the darkness pass away,
How soon the frost will leave the pane
And let the sunlight shine again,
How soon the mist will leave the stream
And let the darkened crystals gleam,
How soon the cloud will break away
That hides the jewels of the day,
Are mysteries we may not solve
And yet we know they will dissolve.

The day, the crystals and the dew
And broken rays will shine anew
And he shall see as he was seen
Through all the darkness that has been.

I. Edmund M. Roscoe.

BARRE ACADEMY

HERE in our midst once stood a school,
No classic shade around it grew,
No columns dressed by Attic rule,
No marble walls their shadows threw.

A pillared porch adorned the front,
A modest touch of ancient art,
Above, a belfry square and blunt,
That hardly seemed a crowning part.

But not in pomp and circumstance
Our greatest good and worth are found.
The unpretentious school, perchance,
May teach us learning deep and sound.

For time and structure matter not.
A lesson learned upon a log
Is worth as much as though 'twere taught
In hall of classic pedagogue.

The light that shone from knots of pine
Upon the page that Lincoln read,
Illumined thoughts as true and fine
As where a golden ray is shed.

DEDICATION OF A SOLDIERS' MONUMENT

THE hills from which you wrought this stone
Have stood the ages through;
The deeds our soldiers dead have done
Like them are grand and true.

The fairest realm is Nature's bane
If heroes be forgot;
The harvest yield is little gain
If worth is treasured not.

Count o'er your wealth of grain and gold–
How poor beside the names
That on our tablets are enrolled,–
The children that are fame's.

Amid these rocks and wooded hills
Shall sleep this noble race,
And mountains be the sentinels
That guard their resting place.

Not storied urn, but grassy sod
Contains the mortal part;
Their spirit is our heritage of God
That liveth in the heart.

The sons of men like these are free
By what their fathers wrought;
The fruits no vision can forsee,
Of battles that they fought.

We know not yet the distant lands
O'er which our flag shall fly;
We only know, in other hands,
It's glory shall not die.

The luster of their deeds shall shine
Through all the coming years,
Till men forget those deeds divine
And valor disappears.

This humble witness of our land
May crumble into dust;
The freedom of a race shall stand
To mark their faith and trust.

In benediction let us bow
And lift a prayer of grace
That we our gratitude may show
And make this holy place.

THE CLASS OF EIGHTY-THREE[1]

YOU ask me for a sketch. What shall I say?
What harvest toll since graduation day
From winged years that pass so swiftly by
I cannot count their milestones if I try?
Of others, not of self, I'll sing today,
Of olden times and scenes long past away.
And short and sweet the story is in telling
Of vanished scenes that in our minds are dwelling.

I see again the Class of Eighty-Three,
A lusty lot of lads you will agree,
A happy, jolly set of Dartmouth men
As ever swung a bat or pushed a pen.
And whether from the hills or plains we came
We had a worthy purpose just the same.

We waded through old Quimby's mathematics
Long since forgotten in our dusty attics.
A few who were peculiar in their actions
Went forward till they flunked in conic sections.
Professor Hardy took the upper class
But Tute[2] had no descendants of the ass.

1. Written for a class history.
2. Tutor Worthen.

Both classes worked till graduation day
But which was best is not for me to say.
Professor Hardy was so thin and slim,
A line between two points resembled him.
Although he wore the latest style of dress
He made us know and would not let us guess.
But Tute marked high when loudest was the noise
At jokes he cracked upon his luckless boys.
He loved applause and made the lessons easy
With jests at us when we were mixed and hazy.

How restively we warmed the classic bench
While Parlez Vous[1] instructed us in French;
And all of us displayed our nerve and pluck
Until we mastered physics under Chuck.[2]
We studied chemic atoms under Bob,[3]
A work that often made our temples throb.
We chased those atoms through the formulae
Although elusive as an Irish flea.
They always seemed to be upon the wing
And had no pesky necks that we could wring;
But if, perchance, they were endowed with eyes
They saw our marks were just about their size.
Hitchcock, a saint of geologic fame,
Who had a curious pseudonymic name,
Tried hard to teach our sophomoric blocks
The wonders found in strata and in rocks.

1. Prof. Pollens. 2. Prof. Emerson
3. Prof. Bartlett

Where landscapes lie as in a dream
And all the world is free of care.

(P. 77)

Professor Sanborn taught us how to speak,
What models were the best for us to seek,
How use our hands and arms to emphasize,
How with our thoughts to let them fall or rise.
Although specific were the rules he taught
We pawed the air and lost our thread of thought,
So when our thoughts went soaring to the skies,
The hand might point to where the hot place lies.
We spoke our pieces Friday, hangman's day,
Upon the spot where Webster blazed away.
The chapel platform seemed a rocking ship
Forever ready for its final dip.
The sickness of the sea cannot compare
With all the shaky ills we had to bear.
'Twas worth the cost. There is no way to reach
The hearts of others like the art of speech.

Today, the skill to scribble on a stool
Supplants the art once honored in the school.
The eloquence that swayed the people's will
No longer moves the legislative mill.
No sparks of wisdom fly from mental flint
When Solons only ask for leave to print,
When senators must practice with a fork
Because the tool is used in handling pork.
All high debate is banished from the floor,
We grant five minutes talk, then slam the door.
Time gives the statesman rank (though 'tis a pity)
And honored place on this or that committee.

A service tag upon a money bag
Is honor's prize for which we strut and brag.

At church there is no crowd to jostle through
Nor wake the devil sleeping in your pew,
But multitudes will gather, sweat and loll
To watch the fortunes of a game of ball.
The preacher reads a dry-leaf invitation
Inviting sinners to accept salvation.
But Billy Sunday weilds the vocal rod
And thousands hit the sawdust trail for God.
Behold the hosts upon their mission sent
When Hermit Peter woke a continent!
The voice of Chatham leaning on his crutch
Bade England rise with empires in her clutch.
What bold and burning words did Henry fling
Square on the forehead of a British king!
Above the clash of swords and roar of guns
Lloyd George proclaims the will of England's sons.

The pen, though it be mightier than the sword,
Has not the power of the spoken word.
When God created Heaven, Earth and Men
He used the tongue Himself and not the pen.
He spoke, each star and planet took its station;
He spoke, and light broke on the new creation.
The two must differ as the weak and strong
Because man made the pen, God made the tongue.

But we digress. Let us resume our theme
While Billy works the world's redemption scheme.

We took a course of Latin and of Greek,
Which few could read and none of us could
speak.
How eagerly we used to dig and pull
To get Greek roots we found were tough and
whole,
Though Cadmus planted them so long ago
I do not know the year,—perhaps you do.
Some have the foolish notion they are dead
Because they lift no trees above our head,
But you will find they have the vital sap
That bore the fruit that filled Athena's lap,
And that they've grown and spread until they
reach
Through many varied forms of living speech.
The words that Homer used, still fresh and terse,
Are glorious settings of immortal verse.

They bothered me and made me such a fool
I once mistook a heifer for a bull.
The whole class laughed, they had no better
sense,
Though they could make like blunders then and
since.
Jack[1] stammered, hitched and blushed from
ear to ear

1. Prof. Wright

And said my reading was a little queer,
For it he found no warrant in the text,
And so he flunked me dead and called the next.

We followed Caesar over mountains icy
And heard him boasting, "Veni, vidi, vici."
Today they read it, "Wanee, weedee, weekee"
And rhyme the famous bulletin with squeaky.
But little more they know how Caesar said it
Than Parker did who taught us how to read it.
But let them wag their tongues a different way,
We got the sense of it as quick as they.
We studied hard great Caesar's ways and rules
That might not meet the test in modern schools.
In open field in terrible array
He led his legions to the bloody fray.
It matters not what sound he gave his vowels
Who drove his sword into Helvetian bowels.

A freshman tried to prove, the story runs,
That Caesar used the latest style of Maxim guns.
But Parker asked for facts about the secret
And said he might have used a tennis racket;
Or else the art of making guns was lost
And buried by the side of Caesar's ghost.
If found, the fancy and the facts might fit.
The freshman blushed at the Professor's wit
And many weeks he spent in ardous moil;
But missed the facts in spite of all his toil.

We sent that freshman to the whitewashed
church[1]
Where barnyard fowls beneath the rafters perch.

We read the eloquence of Cicero
Denouncing Verres as an alien foe
And sat with Horace on his Sabine farm
Far from the city's roar and war's alarm.
We heard Demosthenes beside the sea
Or thundering to his fierce Democracy.
We took a humble seat in Plato's school
And conned the thoughts that through the
ages rule.

We knew that Virgil would have written
English
Had he but known how Latin caused us anguish.
We cursed him not because he made us toil
And gladly burned for him our midnight oil.
He sang the wrath Achilles wrought on Troy,
The joys and sorrows of her wandering boy.
We read his pleasant story grandly told
And loved it then, and love it now we're old.
He missed one joy, and that was Johnny Lord,[2]
Who could explain each doubtful tense and word,
For Johnny was the boy upon the spot

1. A white-washed barn known as the Freshman's Church.
2. Prof. Lord

To trip us in the Latin we forgot.
He always could explain the reason why
When Virgil's facts and story went awry.

We thought Anchises made a heavy load
As brave Aeneas bore him down the road.
But what of that? He found the goodly ships
That bore him through the seas to Dido's lips,
And Cupid soon arranged the marriage plans
But jealous Jupiter forbade the banns.
Naught else to do, Aeneas changed his mind
And sailed away and left a queen behind;
And that is how he came to Latium's shore
And set a line a thousand years and more.

No doubt, Achilles thought he was some boy
When dragging Hector round the walls of Troy.
Less glorious, perhaps, it was more funny,
To see us prance upon a college pony.
Our doughty steed, with neck unclothed in thunder,
Trotted through the classic lands without a blunder.
He switched his tail and stamped upon the sod
And ate his oats and let old Homer nod.
He had no wings to skip the mountain tops
But kept good time with all the rhythmic stops.
He was an ever present useful beast
And surely does deserve a tear, at least.

We heard Pa Leeds, who preached in mono-
tones
And found his sermons in the sleepy stones,
For had he found them in the noisy brook,
We would have missed the naps we often took.
But if, perchance, he left our hearts unreached
We knew full well he practised what he preached.

We see old Prexy[1] with his hat and cane
And hear his salutation sound again,–
"Good morning, sir," he said, with courtly bow
Abending to the right and somewhat low.
His presence active, austere and alert
Made shivers creep beneath the freshman's
shirt.
Of scant proportions, short in stature
The gods endowed him with a virile nature.
To emphasize that none should be a shirk
And punctuate his prayers, his head would jerk.
In Christian scholarship both rich and sound,
His like is rare in all the world around.

We see old Dartmouth Hall, three stories
high,
With belfry limned against the northern sky.
What fond associations gather there!
What memories are haunting hall and stair!
How musical its chapel bell appears
With gathered sweetness of a hundred years!

1. Pres. Bartlett.

Its frame, a product of the woodman's axe;
So strong, it seemed like one of Nature's facts.
Its window blinds were green, its walls were
white
Yet dear they were as seen in any light.
At morn, how often dreading monitors,
We rushed from breakfast storming through its
doors;
For we had learned he was a luckless chap
Whose sleep had caused an absence for a nap.

Though life therein was frolicsome and glad,
Its rooms were simple as the Spartans had,
Warmed by the stoves that burned the living
coal
And not by pipes that run from hole to hole
And seem to reach into the nether world
Where lost and unrepentant souls are hurled.
Upon our hearths no rats could toast their toes
Nor here and there in warm partitions doze.
Although we woke to wash in frozen bowls
Our fingers dingy with the smutty coals,
Who would exchange the glowing cheerful grate
For hissing pipes that fill the soul with hate?
What else can satisfy the heart's desire
In equal measure with a genial fire?
You feel its glow and let your fancy play
While magic castles rise and fade away.
You watch the rings that float upon the air,
Frail barks, but strong to bear away your care.

How oft a fire inspires the poet's muse
Until his thoughts in forms of beauty fuse!
The student's room, indeed, has lost a charm
Whose atmosphere the new devices warm.

One part may have a special interest
That some may favor over all the rest.
But who forgets the Alley known as Bug
Where "beasties" nestled in the beds so sung,
And took their lawless exercise at night
And woke the sleeper with their vicious bite?
That made the freshmen choose, they felt so limpy,
To sleep on stones down in the Vale of Tempe?
What theme were this had Bobby Burns been there
Who sang the louse upon a lady's hair
And prayed the gods so strong the gift "to gie us"
That we might see ourselves as others see us?
Although unsung the bug was not uncursed
By every soul that felt the wounds he nursed.
And though the specie is, perhaps, extinct
Its name is with a famous Alley linked.

Some say the oculist had less to do
When pine knots lit the page our fathers knew,
Or that the eyes were strong and unabused
When harpoon oil or tallow dips were used.
We will not now discuss the kinds of light
But turn again to Dartmouth Hall at night,

When student lamps and not electric films
Shone through the panes upon the campus elms.
Methinks those panes were windows of the soul
That indistinctly lit our future goal!
Its corridors then echoed to the tread
Of feet that sought the path where Duty led;
Its stairs, if not the golden ones of fame,
Were steps to heights where shines an honored name.
At last the furies claimed it for their prey
And in an hour its form had passed away.
But from its ashes sprang a structure new
That to the olden purpose will be true.

But this we know, that after all is told,
In all the new, we cannot find the old.
Some feet that woke the echoes of the hall
Will ne'er return except at Fancy's call;
Some voices joyous in our college sports
Will ne'er be heard except in Memory's courts.
Not all the gods of earth possess the power
To bring us back a vanished day or hour.
No tears we shed, no words that we can say,
Restore companions of our work and play.

We will not close with light and flippant phrase
Concerning those who well deserve our praise.
Our debt of gratitude we gladly pay
To each professor of our college day;

True teachers when they praised or chided us,
Philosophers who wisely guided us.
Their labors were too poorly paid on earth,
Their final prize shall better suit their worth.
The most of them have passed beyond the bar
Whose sea is lighted by the promised star,–
Examples of a Christian chivalry,
Each soul, a name of blessed memory.
A few remain, a trinity is all;[1]
Long may they live before the shadows fall!

1. Since this was written, I have learned that more than three old professors are living in 1917.

THE FOUNDER OF DARTMOUTH

FAR up beneath the northern stars
Where landscapes lay in quietude
And northern lights in rainbow bars
Streamed o'er a primal solitude,

Far from the sounds of busy marts
And rush and din of peopled street,
Where unmolested roamed the harts
In paths untrod by human feet,

'Twas there a seed of learning fell
That lifts a form as God had planned:
In sun and storm it groweth well
And twice a thousand years shall stand.

And who was he who set the seed?
No scion of a royal line, –
He was a man of common breed
Yet one whose clay was moulded fine.

But whether prophet, saint or sage
Let others say who better know,
For we shall our opinion gauge
By what his patient labors show.

We see him on the forest road,
Afaring north with rum and books,
His oxen tugging at their load,–
How wild the whole adventure looks!

We laugh and jest about his rum,
His many oddities of creed
And smile at his curriculum
That poorly meets our present need.

To judge by these would do him wrong;
They measure not his life and plan.
Beneath them lay his manhood strong
Through which a noble purpose ran.

How oft we fain would mold anew
The figures of the elder days,
As if our power could make more true
The forms who trod heroic ways.

We spin the wheel with 'prentice skill
And think our work will little lack
Until at last, for all our will,
We find we've made a jumping jack.

But gods of old could spin the wheel,—
Though here a mole upon the cheek
Or there a spot upon the heel
Their forms did live and move and speak.

Our founder had, as you may say,
His share of foibles and of faults;
But did he not pursue his way,
Led by a purpose that exalts?

Here in the wold he built a fire
Not fed by withered leaves and wood
But by the soul's unquenched desire
To spread the love of Christianhood.

Though you and I have lived to see
A rich fruition of his work
We cannot see what yet shall be
The good a distant age shall mark.

Fame's trumpet louder may have blown
Elswhere; but while these hills shall stand
They'll keep, as treasure of their own,
An impress of his heart and hand.

A SCRAP OF PAPER

"'TIS nothing but a scrap of paper,
A covenant that time has made absurd,
So fold it in a dusty wrapper
And lay aside a Nation's broken word."*

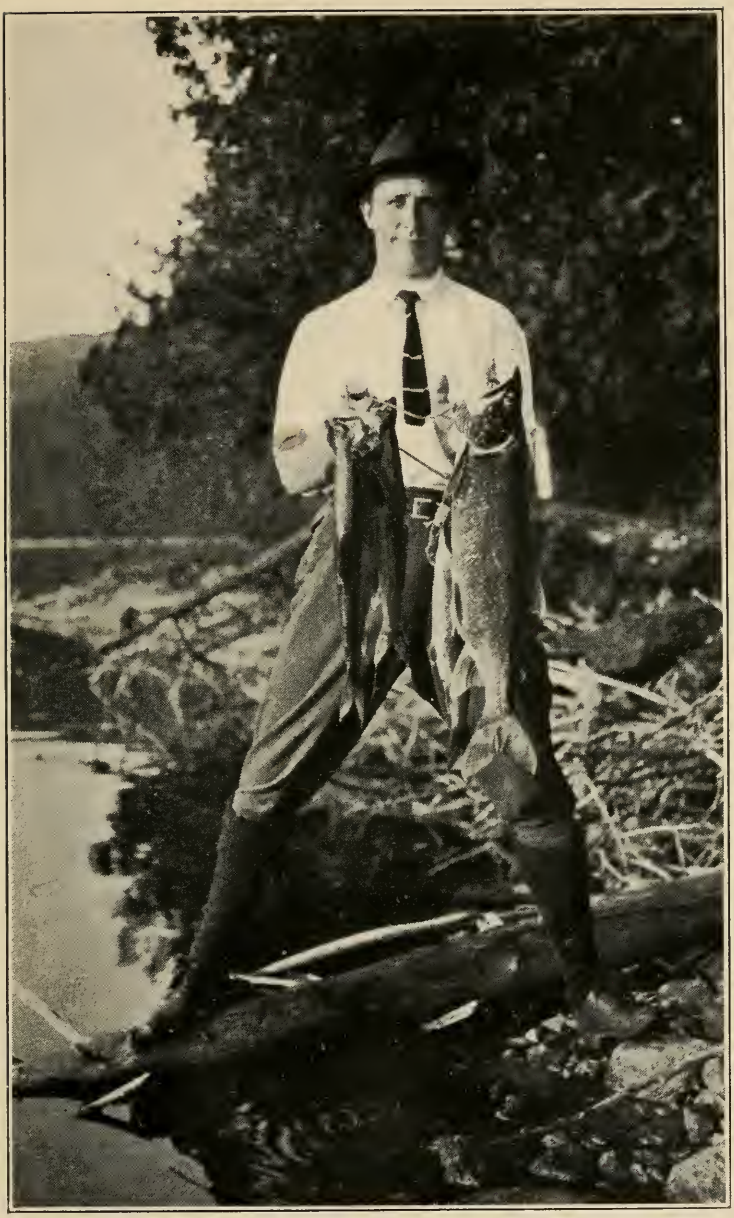
When will the martial conflicts cease,
If solemn bond is but an idle deed?
When will the thousand years of peace
Be ushered in, if faith's a broken reed?

Not till the faithless kings are gone
And earth is bound in universal law,
And all who stand beneath the sun,
Shall hold our God and his decrees in awe.

* Refers to Von Bethman-Hollweg's declaration respecting the treaty guaranteeing the neutrality of Belgium.

VISION OF PEACE

THE vision that the prophets saw,
Shall be fulfilled beneath the law;
A thousand years shall be a day
And twice a thousand pass away,
Yet peace shall wear a smiling face
And wars no longer vex the race,
The swords and spears shall turn to shares,
The wheat shall grow without its tares,
The laden ships go down to sea,
The rivers flow unvexed and free,
And far and wide the deserts bloom,
Their fairest flower, the freeman's home.



Had Adam been a little wise,
And given Eve a taste of trout,
He might have saved the paradise
From which mankind was driven out.

(P. 78)

A SCOTCH FRIEND[1]

FROM Scotland's heathered land he came
When life was in its prime,
The new world's hope had lured him on
To seek our newer clime.

He wore no title, brought no wealth
Except the manhood given,
The like of which if multiplied
Would make the earth a heaven.

A generous soul as we have known
And quietly he wrought;
Whatever gift one hand might give
The other knew it not.

None envied him what he had gained
By honest toil and thrift,
For many shared with him that gain
By many a private gift.

"Here fellah, tak' it for the bairns."
Such was his Scottish burr,
But kindlier tone is rarely heard
To set the heart astir.

1. George B. Milne.

Although the world may send us dregs,
It sometimes sends its best,
And such was he whom we have loved
And now have laid to rest.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN

O LAKE! a light of olden skies
Is on thy surface shining,
A glory and a splendor lies
Around thy shores undying.

The memories of distant years
Upon the soul are thronging,
Recalling all the hopes and fears
To other times belonging.

Here England came with armied host
That bore the cross and dragon;
And France her northern empire lost
In the struggle with the Saxon.

Here sprang the hopes that tyrants mocked
From thrones beyond the ocean;
And on these gentle waves was rocked
The cradle of a Nation.

These skies, these hills, these waters blue,
Have trembled with the thunder
When Freedom's cause was born anew
And bondage broke asunder.

From northern bound to southern keep
The battlements are leveled;
In peace of God the heroes sleep
Where savage foes have reveled.

No more the sounds of savage war
Shall echo through these mountains,
Where bloodless now the rivers pour
The waters of their fountains.

The hostile fires that lit the shore
Shall ne'er again be lighted;
These prospects fair shall grow to more
And ne'er again be blighted.

The sounds and cries of savage dance,
That broke the primal stillness,
Have gone, like chivalry of France
And England's mighty prowess.

In thought alone, the woodland bell
Is ringing as we listen,
And casts on us a magic spell
As midnight waters glisten.

The warrior bands of spirit land
Around these islands hover,
And meet upon the forest strand
To count their trophies over.

The winds that o'er these waters sweep
    Are freighted with a story
That dusty archives never keep
    Of legendary glory.

The spirits of Montcalm and Stark,
    Of Amherst, Howe and Allen,
Like stars, this firmament shall mark
    As sacred to the fallen.

For hero souls, as legends say,
    Are stars within the azure
And shed a light upon our way
    That mortals cannot measure.

COLUMBUS

WHEN God in bounty gave this earth to man,
With all its priceless treasures blessed,
It was a part of his eternal plan
That they should be an endless quest.

He spreads his lands beneath the distant skies
And pours his oceans round them all
Till many a land, a lost Atlantis lies
Beyond the deeps where dread horizons fall.

He gave no chart or sail for all his seas,
No guide to treasures of his lands,
But bound them all in fearful mysteries,
Yet left the key in human hands.

From land to land through ages of the past,
Through desert sand and trackless wood,
The pioneer did press, until at last
The ocean in his pathway stood.

The feeble eye could see the vast expanse,
Horizons bent to waters blue,
The endless billows in an endless dance
That stretched to shores that no one knew.

Along those pathways of the mighty deep
The stars had never seen a sail;
Alone, the thunder broke the monster's sleep
When o'er the waters swept the gale.

The wonders of the deep appalled the soul,
The strength of distance, storm and tide
Defied the puny craft of man's control
And mocked and baffled all his pride.

Of all the generations, who would dare
To seek the course of setting sun
And lay the mysteries and wonders bare
That baffled hope since time begun?

Yes, who? How long before the answer comes!
What noble heart will say, "I dare"?
How long will man keep building little Romes
When larger worlds might be his share?

What pittance of a border war's expense,
Could spread the sail and lay the keel
To solve the age-long problem of suspense,
And break the bond of Nature's seal.

At last, beneath the humble cotter's roof,
Endowed with inate strength and worth,
Was born the soul that dared the toil of proof,
To solve the riddle of the earth.

He pushed his prow into an unknown sea
Until the needle lost its star [1]
And fearful mysteries that had no key
Spread o'er the waste that had no bar.

With unfamiliar stars the skies were sown
As from the ancient shore he drifted
Into a realm where sails had never flown,
Where neither isle nor headland lifted.

All hearts were faint, all minds were filled with fear,
Lest legends of the sea be true
That monsters of the ocean would appear
To swallow up the ship and crew.[2]

What anxious hours, what vigils of the night,
What search of sea and sky for sign
That their frail caravels were steering right
To prove the plan of God's design!

1. As he sailed westward, Columbus discovered that the needle deflected more and more from the North Star and anticipating the superstitious fears of his pilots he invented the theory that the deflection was due to the revolution of the star in its orbit.

2. At the time Columbus sailed there was a superstitious belief that somewhere in the western ocean was the end of the world inhabited with huge monsters capable of swallowing a ship.

A floating weed, a drifting piece of wood,
The flight of birds that haunt the land,
The golden mist that 'round the horizon stood
Were tokens of the longed-for strand.

At last a ray of light shone through the dark.
The watchers whispered, "Did you see?"
And eagerly they gazed and watched the spark
That flashed across the midnight sea.

It disappeared. Was it the witches' light?
Who kindled it? What might it mean?
Would morning bring a continent in sight
Along the pathway of its sheen?

What moments change our fate! The coming morn
Might change the course of destiny.
No land and dread of dangers to be borne
Might lift the hand of mutiny.

The Admiral alone possessed the faith
That kept the rudder to the west.
In spite of doubt or dread or water wraith
He bore the burden of his quest.

Beyond the line where sky to water dips
He saw the shores of old Cathay;
Its spicy harbors, filled with men and ships
That crossed the world by th' western way.

He saw the walls of old Jerusalem
Whose streets the paladins had trod.
He'd arm a host and win a diadem
As victor at the tomb of God.[3]

It was his dream, but what a dream it was!
It lured him onward to his goal,
And proved the truth of everlasting laws
That rule the earth from pole to pole.

The earth was round! And superstition died
When on the distant island shore
The great Columbus knelt with humble pride
And kissed the sands of Salvador.

3. Columbus intended to devote the wealth derived from his discoveries to a new crusade for the recovery of the holy sepulchre.

MODERN WAR

THE winds of the north, the winds of the south
Are hot with the flames of the cannon's mouth
And mingled with the scent of the flowers
Is the stench of the flesh the rat devours.

Did the barbarous Hun in the far off days
Ever ply his art in the murderous ways
That are used by the Christ-taught children of light
In order to win in the martial fight?

The lurid flame of the death-giving gas
That withers our sons as it withers the grass,
The smoke that chokes in the throat and the lungs
And burns in the eyes and blisters the tongues,

The sharks that swim in the ocean caves
And laugh at the child that sinks in the waves,
The dragons that fly through the regions of air
And drop from their wings with a dastard's care

The missiles that fall on the sleeping land
To do the work of the devil's own hand,–
All of these, great God, and a thousand more
Are daily things in a modern war.

THE ODD FELLOW

AND who are you? The fellow counted odd
And proud as any who may tread the sod.
Of friendship, love and truth you wear the sign
Your Order gives that life be noble and benign.

You eke the widow's mite, the orphans' share,
That none may lack the needful dole and care.
Your lineage backward runs a hundred years
But forward long as men have grief and tears.

Three links are all you number in your chain,
But round the world they reach and back again
And millions have they bound and yet will bind
In brotherhood as broad as humankind.

It matters not what distance you may roam,
In every lodge you find a brother and a home.
No star that watches out its nightly course,
No spring that gushes from its pebbled source,

Can better symbolize your thought and deed
Than your three links—your bond of help and need.
Then sing the links that bind a brotherhood
In noble acts of charity and good.

The sum of happiness for age and youth
Is ever found in friendship, love and truth.
These are the angels three that will attend
Till every man in each shall find a friend.

SIR ISAAC'S SPORT

OF all the arts that men employ
To satisfy their love of pleasure,
What other yields a greater joy
Or fills the heart with fuller measure,
Than angling in a mountain stream
Where air and sun at best appear,
Where landscapes lie as in a dream
And all the world is free of care?

There in and out, 'neath bank and root,
In shyness dart the finny prey;
Across the pebbles see them shoot
As swift as is the lightning's ray;
Or poised against the current's force,–
An image in the crystal mirror,–
They drink the drafts of the woodland source;
Then frightened flee away in terror.

No awkward hand can win a bite
And give them courage for the hook;
By skillful throw, the fly must light
As if it flew into the brook.
They know a clown when one appears;
His stumbling step and halting way,
To sharpest eyes and keenest ears,
The danger of the hook betray.

No angler who has learned his art
Will cast a shadow, make a sound
At which the finny prey will start,–
Success in gentleness is found.
And that is why, it's often said,
The anglers win in love and sport,
For how can trout or pretty maid
Resist the charms with which they court?

What simple means! A bit of cork
That ripples cause to rise and fall,
A worm upon a silver fork,
A rod, a line and lead are all.
But great results are often due
To little things that we despise.
No better feast hath king than you
When fish upon the platter lies.
In ev'ry brook the heavens lie
So fishes are a heavenly brood;
The angler casts into the sky
And catches there an angel's food.

Had Adam been a little wise
And given Eve a taste of trout
He might have saved the Paradise
From which mankind was driven out.
The serpent with his cunning guile
Could not have made the apple seem
As tempting as a woman's smile
And caused the fall we must redeem.

THE CHILD AND THE STARS

I SAW the stars lie on the river's bed,
They seemed as real as those above my head.
I cast a pebble on the sleeping stream,
And, lo! they danced as in a troubled dream.

A child laughed at my side and asked me why
I did not make the stars dance in the sky.
I flung a pebble at the distant blue;
She laughed and watched it as it upward flew.

But when she saw it fall she ceased her laughter
Because they did not dance as in the water.
I tried to tell her why, but little more
She learned from me than what she knew before.

How little did I know the starry mist.
Her knowledge went as deep as mine, I wist,
Into the secrets of the Maker's plan
By which the stars shall shine and baffle man.

THE DONNAR OAK

DEEP in the forest gloom of Hesse
There grew a mighty oak,
And from its heart, as people thought,
The voice of Donnar spoke.

This Donnar was a heathen god
To whom the Germans prayed;
This oak his home, where all were blessed
Who stood within its shade.

But with an axe one festal day
A priest hewed down the oak[1],
And as it fell beneath his blows,
A bond of error broke,

They watched his blows expecting wrath
To fall upon his head,
But unavenged the giant fell
And faith in it was dead.

1. In the seventh century the Irish missionary, Boniface, cut down an oak from which the Germans believed their god, Donnar, spoke.

Each night the sky shall drop its stars
Into the crystal water,
And write his name in golden bars
For all the ages after.

(P. 90)

How oft we seek divinities
And find them made of wood!
How oft we glorify a thing
That's neither great nor good!

The faith that bound the forest children
To think a tree divine
Is like the one that holds today
Where flows the river Rhine.

Not in an oak but camp and court
The present god is found
Who claims a scepter from the sky
As one by Heaven crowned.

"Vice-regent on the earth am I,
So let my will be done;
So let my armies win for me
A place within the sun."

It is an error born anew
That held the world in thrall;
An error that we must destroy
Lest freedom's temple fall.

HONEST JOHN[1]

'TIS not by any set and formal plan
That Nature makes her finest creature, man;
Nor does she on the outer form unroll
The beauty, strength and value of the soul.

She has a purpose in her forms of clay
But why they differ so, we cannot say.
She gave an ugly face to Socrates
And to Adonis, gave a form to please.

The former taught the world philosophy,
The latter showed it pride and vanity.
Although uncouth in manners, form and dress
We love our Nation's Martyr none the less.

Our brother boasted not of outward grace
Yet few more wished to fill an honored place.
By service and by deed he truly won
The worthy sobriquet of Honest John.

He had no double meaning when he spoke,
We trusted to the word he never broke;

1. John H. Senter.

A lover and a student of the law,
The line twixt right and wrong he tried to draw.

Yes; valiantly he ran the race of life
And won a goal of unembittered strife,
Forgotten now let all his frailties be,–
'Tis lawyer, friend and citizen we see.

THE REUNION AT GETTYSBURG

(1913)

THE years have flown, two score and ten,
Since twice a hundred thousand men
Were locked in mighty deadly strife
To take or keep the Nation's life.
God willed this crescent hill should be
A trysting place of destiny;
This gentle valley, golden then,
Should be a human slaughter pen.
He willed the masters here should bleed
For centuries of sin and greed;
Their blood be poured upon this sod
To satisfy the wrath of God
And make secure the Fathers' plan,–
The noblest heritage of man.

Here Lee hurled forth the matchless corps,
Whose deeds shall echo ever more,–
A thunder bolt to clear the way
Where stood the guns of Doubleday.
Though faster fell the iron hail,
And longer grew the bloody trail,
And men like stubble withered fast,
Before the cannon's fiery blast,

And from the earth the red streams gushed
Where hellish missiles cut and crushed;
It mattered not,—in perfect form
They marched into the fiery storm.

They swept the slope and stormed the crest
And part way through the ramparts pressed;
Then man to man the battle rages
To solve a question of the ages.

So short the flame, it seems a spark,
So close, it burns the bullet's mark.
The shouts and cries that rend the air,
The curse that dies in smothered prayer,
The surge and tug of the seething mass,
The lines that break like brittle glass,
The breach through which the rebels swarm,
The furious rush to meet the storm,
The heaps of dead in pools of blood,
(The ghastly dunes of the crimson flood,)
The clash of arms and roar of guns,
All tell how fierce the tempest runs
Where back and forth the standards reel
As columns bend before the steel.

How long, O God, can last the battle
Where men are slain like driven cattle?
It seems an age. 'Tis but an hour
That sinks or lifts a people's power.

The tumult dies and loud and clear
Rings out the joyous Northern cheer.
The host that came in brave array
Is but a splendor passed away;
While o'er the cloud that hid the slope
God built a bow of glorious hope.

No braver charge, no braver stand,
Is found in any age or land.
The fury that assailed this ridge
Once swept across the Lodi bridge,
And rode at Balaklava's charge,–
A deed that gilds the British targe.
But the spirit of Thermopylae
Lives in the hearts of men born free;
It nerved the arms that held this crown
And beat the Southland's fury down.

Today a Nation mourns her sons,
Alike the true and erring ones;
Upon the graves of all she lays
The cypress branch and laurel bays,
For like in honor fell the brave
Beneath the north or southern stave.
Cast in heroic mould was each,
And both shall unborn ages teach
Devotion, tried in blood and flame
That consecrates the soldier's name.

All honor to the Blue and Gray
That meet beneath one flag today;
The bitterness of strife forgot
Upon the field for which they fought.
Their eyes beheld a wonder born;
Upon the banners rent and torn
They saw the withering flame of war
Rekindle each extinguished star,
And long as shall our banners fly
The kindled glory shall not die.
They purged the nation of its dross;
Reset, as guide, the Christian cross
Upon this western shore of earth,
Where men are free by right of birth.

OVER THE TOP.

OVER the top we go tomorrow,
Though shot and shell may rend our ranks,
To win the foeman's trenches narrow
In the wake of the lumbering tanks.

Over the top with cheer and jest
To race with death through No Man's Land,
And answer to the hero's test
In the hour by destiny planned.

Over the top with thoughts of home
Where moistened eyes may read "In case,"
Writ by the light where cannons boom
And the flare of the shells in our face.

Over the top beneath drum fire
And through the clouds of poisoned gas,
That float along, a funeral pyre,
Like the fumes of the Witches' grass.

Over the top and some will fall,
Their blood will sink and harvests grow
Where flocks shall hear the shepherd's call
When the sun in the West is low.

Over the top without a fear
And some will see our banners fly,
And win and wear the *croix de guerre*
While their comrades in glory lie.

A CHEVALIER

AS brave and tender was Champlain,
As any whom we treasure;
To him a soul was greater gain
Than empire's amplest measure.

The ways of tolerance he trod
When faith was cold and bitter;
He gave his life to France and God,
To make a people better.

Each night the sky shall drop its stars
Into the crystal water
And write his name in golden bars
For all the ages after.

ROCK DUNDER

HERE stands the rock, the Mohawk bound,
The warrior's savage altar;
The peaceful waves that ripple round
Have oft been red with slaughter.

For none of all the northern lands
Below its line could venture,*
Except to fight the Mowhawk bands,
The fiercest sons of Nature.

*Tradition says the Mohawks inflicted death upon all who ventured south of a line drawn east and west of Rock Dunder.

PRESENTING DINING SET TO A PASTOR

YOU came to guard a wayward flock,
You brought the zeal of youthful years;
You stand upon the Christian rock
That shelters hope against our fears.

Your guidance leads to pleasant ways,
Beyond the font with broken bowl,
Where God his golden pavement lays
And builds the temple of the soul.

But Eden's loss has left us needs,
The flesh is heir to daily care;
The soul may feed on heavenly creeds
But bodies live on daily fare.

We bring you that on which to spread
The earthly bounties of your Lord;
On which to break the blessed bread
Your humble pittance may afford.

Yet enemies shall never see
A sumptious feast before them spread,
For enemies can never be
Where Love and Kindness break the bread.

Your manly ways, your careful thought,
The manners of your tempered mind,
Are witnessed in the gift we've brought
To show that works are things that bind.

May grace upon your table rest
As you its bounties shall partake;
Let us in spirit be your guest
And find it blessed to give and take.

OUR CHARMS

THERE are flowers that bloom on our hills
That in beauty and fragrance excel;
There are songs that are sung by our rills
That are casting a magical spell.

In our deep wooded dells you will find,
Not the diamonds you cut for a crown,
But the flowers and grasses combined
That the hands of the fairies have sown.

You may search through the earth as you will
In the climes that are famous in story,
But the grandest of splendor is still
In our mornings and sunsets of glory.

SENATOR L.

BY one our number's growing less,
By one we'll answer to the call;
Who next, we neither know nor guess,
Will be the one to fall.

Since last we met, has passed a brother,
Whom we could proudly call a peer.
As years shall pass and we shall gather
For him we'll drop a tear.

We see him now, so full of years
That he had passed the Bible limit,
Yet well he bears his weight of cares
In toiling towards the summit.

His memory is not a sorrow.
His name and worth remain a pleasure,
A cup of joy for each tomorrow,
With overflowing measure.

SENATOR B.

SWIFT comes the light, swift falls the dark,
Swift spins the wheel that shapes the clay;
Ere we a form can clearly mark
It is a shadow passed away.

How short the years since all were strong
And parting seemed an intermission
As if the time would not be long
Before we met again in session.

Five times since then we've gathered here:[1]
Each time an absent one was noted,
Each time a voice we failed to hear
Until five vacant chairs are counted.

Tonight we miss another form,
Of stalwart build and pleasant feature;
Whose heart for all beat true and warm
Because he had a kindly nature.

1. Senate Chamber.

Though leaves may fall, the tree is sound,
Its heart no frost nor rust can harm;
With roots spread in the genial ground
It smiles in sun and laughs in storm.

(P. 114)

He served his country in her needs,
His State in legislative hall,
Society by useful deeds,–
A faithful servant to them all.

We lay a wreath upon his chair
In attitude of silent prayer,
And trust the sea beyond the bar
Is lighted by the promised star.

SENATOR G.

THE pleasant isles of Lake Champlain
Are jewels in a sun-kissed main.
What better place for him to dwell,
Whose life was true, whose work was well?
With modesty he bore his part,
And sought no gain by trick or art.
No boisterous ways, no loud pretense,
E'er marred his course of common sense.

He came to us in manhood's prime;
We thought not of his measured time.
His health and vigor prophesied
A length of days, ere ebbed the tide
Of life, that flowed so full and strong,–
But none, alas, may tarry long!

Among the first his race is run,–
If all would run as straight a one
The earth, a fairer, better place
Would be for all the human race.

DARTMOUTH REUNION

DEAR Alma Mater, mother of us all,
From east and west, we gladly come,
A happy throng, in answer to thy call
That bids thy children gather home.

We see thy graciousness increased with years,
We count no wrinkles on thy brow,
Still beautiful and young thy face appears;
As first we saw, we see thee now.

Unchanged, save in the circumstance of dress,
We view again thy stately mien
And gazing on thy present loveliness,
With childhood ardor, call thee Queen.

Methinks thy cradle was a wind-rocked bough,
Thyself, an orphan of the forest.
Thy birthplace hath become an altar now
Where thousands worship thee as dearest.

With unshod feet let us approach thy shrine,
Let all our vows be loyal ones,
And from thine eyes let love and blessing shine
Upon thy proud and gathered sons.

SOLDIERS' MONUMENT*

THE war drums beat no more to bloody fray,
The march is done for both the Blue and Gray,
The music of the fife, the cannon's roar,
Shall thrill the heart and stir the brain no more.

The Southern fields that once were dank and red
Are sacred urns that hold the ashes of our dead.
The battle flags that floated on the breeze,
Are locked in dusty glass with rusty keys.

Is this our all? Our tribute to the brave?
How little, paltry, for the much they gave!
Each mart should have its monumental stone
To keep alive the deeds our dead have done.

If we would half as freely give our gold,
As they their blood, for rights we sacred hold,
We'd blush no more to think we had forgot
At what a price the Nation's life was bought.

Upon this City of our pride shall rest a shame
As long as we neglect the soldier's fame;
The granite of our hills should turn to dust
Until we make of it a shrine of trust.

*Written in 1914 to aid in raising funds for a soldiers' monument at Barre, Vermont.

What kind of men are we that build for others
The monuments that we refuse our brothers.
Oh! Let the hand forget its cunning craft
That builds for them no monumental shaft.

We profit in our trade by th' blood they shed,
And turn to gold the ashes of our dead.
Awake! 'Tis duty calls to pay the debt,–
The sacred bond, whose seal in blood was set.

The finest stone when wrought with finest art
Will be a paltry payment on our part.
A blessing to the givers it will be
To honor those who made our country free.

THE STATES TO CANADA

IN western skies we find our star of hope,
And though we set a different flag or trope
To mark the boundaries between our lands,
Across those bounds we gladly clasp the hands.

On either side sits Peace, and Plenty smiles
Along our border of three thousand miles;
And let us pray we'll count as many years
Before an inch is wet with blood or tears.

Although the North and South shall ever be
Divided by a line from sea to sea,
The men who own a common motherhood
Shall find a glory in their brotherhood.

And if the twentieth century be yours,
In measure as the cycle gone was ours,
We will not envy you your happy lot
Nor let the ties of kindred be forgot.

L'envoi.

Then let us place your maple leaf
Beside our mountain golden rod
So that the two shall make a sheaf
To symbolize the will of God.

THE BATTLE OF PLATTSBURG BAY

IT was a bright September day,
When ships of war at anchor lay
Within the arms of Plattsburg Bay,
All decked in war's array.

Behold the stars and stripes afloat
From tallest ship to smallest boat,
While loud and clear the bugle's throat
Sounds forth the martial note.

Responsive comes the sailor's cheer,
And all the decks for action clear
As England's prows are sweeping near,
Inspiring doubt and fear.

Oh! strong the sons of the island State,
In all the deeds of battle great;
The far spread seas their orders wait
As on the law of fate.

A thousand years of sun and gale
Have beat upon their deck and sail
And oft they've seen the foeman quail
Before their iron hail.

But tars, whose home is on the deep,
Whose flag through freedom's sky would sweep,
Today beneath the waves shall sleep
While England's daughters weep.

For here Macdonough's ships, like rock,
Shall stand against their battle shock
And cheering crews and crowing cock*
Old England's pride shall mock.

And Freedom's sons with cannon stroke,
Amid the thunder and the smoke,
Shall smite the vaunted walls of oak
Till none remain unbroke.

Though valiantly the Brittons die,
Their flag no more shall sweep our sky
But stars and stripes alone shall fly
Where Champlain's waters lie.

'Twas thus old England's banner fell,
Where hottest raged the battle hell,
And few her tars who lived to tell
The tale of shot and shell.

*One of the first shots from the English fleet released a rooster from a coop on the American flag ship. The rooster flew upon the rail of the ship and began to crow, whereat all the sailors cheered.

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN CHURCH

WE stand upon the threshold of a new year's grace
And each and all are keeping time with God's eternal sun.
Within the gracious precincts of this sacred place,
Our presence here should show each Sabbath's duty done.

The melodies that cheered the Christian ages gone
Will fill the heart with hope and fresher courage give;
The words repeated here of Heaven's begotten Son
Are orisons to guide the wayward lives we live.

This dedicated place is inspiration's home,
Beside our troubled waters stands this Christian altar;
Here in our path the rays that lit the manger come,
That we may onward press, despite the feet that falter.

Sustained by strength that holds the planet in
its course,
Surrounded by a love like ocean, bounding
all,
Persuaded to the right by strong yet gentle
force,
We find the way where nine should falter,
none should fall.

THE ANGLERS

IT'S many virtues anglers have,
They never lie about their fish;
They know they have their souls to save
And are as truthful as you wish.
They keep the law and Gospel too,
And tell you just the length of each;
If you should search their baskets through
You'd find they practice what they preach.

"The trout I lost," if one should say,
"Was long as is the longest arm
And twenty pounds or more would weigh,"
Don't wince, be credulous and calm.
Don't answer in a sneering tone
And choke and hem and make a muss
As if your throat had caught a bone,–
Just swallow it without a fuss.
A doubting Thomas has no friends,
He doubts us all and all doubt him;
Believe and you will reach your ends
And catch the biggest fish that swim.

The angler is another Job,
He must be patient at his task;
If you should seek around the globe
What greater patience can you ask?

If th' line gets tangled with a root
And minnies eat away the bait,
If th' angler slips and wets a foot,
He does not curse and swear at fate.
For does not Walton truly say
They know that swearing does not pay,
But drives the fish from hook and net.
Had prophet Jonah been profane
A whale would ne'er have been his ark;
It would have dropped him as a bane
And left him as a food for shark.

Our song would lengthen through the night
And pleasantly the hours would fly
If all their virtues we recite,–
So great a task we will not try,
But drink to the men who love the angle,
As fine a lot as we can boast,
Who never fight and never wrangle,
A worthy set for any toast.

STAR OF PEACE

OH Peace, thou intermittant star,
Whose rays are lost in depth of space,
Too weak to break the clouds of war
That shroud the human race.

Thy orbit hath so wide a sweep
That oft to men thou art a stranger,
And brief the vigils that you keep
As when you lit the manger.

'Tis strange that Mars should shine supreme
And fill the sky with baneful light,
When men have prayed to see you gleam,
The symbol of the right.

But earth its purpose shall fulfill
And fly a planet of the sun,
While God is working out his will
That all shall be as one.

DARTMOUTH

WHEN to the north our Eleazar trod,
He bore a torch into the wilderness,
And built a school and temple to his God,
That he might spread enlightened righteousness.

And through the centuries his torch will burn
And, though the forest darkness now is gone,
Still to the light he bore, mankind will turn
And bless the spot on which its rays have shone.

Our college was no marvel at its birth,
No pompous functions laid its corner stone,
Few knew the distant section of the earth,
Where Eleazar chose to toil alone.

But there was greatness in the humble deed,
And in the plan, the wisdom of the sage;
Of ceremonials there was no need,
Nor gaudy trappings of a bannered stage.

How oft a bounteous stream of blessing runs
From out some hidden distant mountain source!
As true and constant as the process of the suns,
It flows through many windings with a quiet force.

The founder of old Dartmouth may have thought
The savage scenes he saw would long remain,
But time and custom have their changes brought
And gathered stores of profit and of gain.

The old humanities were first supreme,
A course of Gospel, Latin and of Greek
Held fast the world's approval and esteem,–
The one desired goal that all must seek.

A change has come and now no more we wonder
To see the learned trace the simian line,
Explore the heavens above and oceans under
Or baser metals for our use refine.

But after all, some doubt if we have gained
By casting by the classic course of old,
They know how well the master minds were trained,
That did the mysteries of life unfold.

What odds! As well debate the style of gown
That is the product of a tailor's art.
By either way you make a man or clown,
As each shall try or fail to do his part.

We know the foibles that the founder had,
How trivial as we weigh them with the good!
His narrow creed to modern thought is bad,
But still eternal truths he understood.

With scanty means he had to work and plan
And none can say he did not do his best;
Amid adversity, he proved himself a man,
And green the laurels on his brow will rest.

The foibles that he had have passed away,
So few we look on them with eyes discerning
And only see with love and pride today,
A noble edifice of Christian learning.

As years increase and generations pass,
The college, once unknown to current fame,
Will often see its usefulness surpass
Establishments that had the world's acclaim.

An altar of the heart to Dartmouth men,
Our college stands among the northern hills.
What charter made to broaden human ken
Was better drawn, or truer mission fills?

Then cheer old Dartmouth with a hearty will,
No strain of sadness mingled with your joy,
And as the years your measured life shall fill,
Remember that you are a Dartmouth boy.

THE TEN PIN CLUB OF CHELSEA

TEN ladies journeyed o'er the hills
To see the sights of Barre,
And what they did my story fills
And made their husbands merry.

These ladies bought ten silver pins;
The husbands up and spoke:
"Just one of woman's petty sins,
The women are a joke."

The ladies soon had laid a plan
To bring the men to shame;
They formed a club as ladies can
With ten pins in its name.

The Club is now a village glory,
Increasing year by year;
Its record is a pleasant story
That Chelseaites hold dear.

The men are sorry for their jest;
The pins have pricked them sore.
The ladies laugh the last and best
And purchase ten pins more.

THE TREE

THOUGH leaves may fall, the tree is sound,
Its heart no frost nor rust can harm;
With roots spread in the genial ground
It smiles in sun and laughs in storm.

NEIGHBORS

THE hands may clasp across the sea
And that be counted much,
But neighbor's hands should warmer be
For closer is the touch.

FORGET IT

IF your name is Smith or Jones
You should rest your weary bones,
And forget the name you bear
That has filled your life with care.

BOSTON

FAIR Boston was the Pilgrim's pride,
Their city by the stately tide;
Far famed her ships have sailed the seas
Far flung her flag has kissed the breeze.

As well, if not the best of all
Her sons have answered Duty's call,
Their deeds have won her world renown,
Athena gave her Athen's crown.

She is the country's eastern gate
At which the ships and navies wait;
Throned in the righteousness of laws
And true to every human cause.

THE NEW INN

THEY have builded us an inn,
They have builded us a house
'Mid the hammer's noise and din
For the public good and use.

If inclined to joy and mirth
You may gather round its hearth
In the season's heat or cold
While the merry tales are told,
And the music fills the night
With its pleasures and delight.
You may smoke the sweetest brand
That is found in all the land,
And the clouds that upward curl
Will your joys and hopes unfurl,
And the castles of old Spain
Will their turrets lift again
In the shadows of the sky
Where the golden sunsets die.

It is cozy, it is grand,
All the comforts at command.
'Tis the latest and the best
Of the lodgings east or west.
Why then farther should you roam
For a welcome and a home?

THE MUCK RAKE

WE are told that the Fathers were wise and were good,
That they seldom were found in the wrong;
For the truth and the Gospel they manfully stood,
And their glory should burden our song.

It is not that we wish to condemn what is old
That we point to the seam in the past,
But to show there were metals aside from the gold
In the figures the ages have cast.

For the rake of today that is used in the muck
For the purpose of passion and hate
Is a tool that the Fathers employed for luck
In the strifes of the town and the state.

And the name, the most lustrous of all on the page,
Was besmirched with the mud of his day;
Not a service of glory could baffle the rage
Of the imps that infested his way.

THE WRECK OF THE REPUBLIC

'TWAS off Nantucket's shoal bound coast,
When winter's blast was sweeping fast
And mighty waves that demons tossed
Shook every ship from keel to mast.

The swirl and swish of waters black,
Whose flying foam, like wings of doom,
Shot upward from the Storm King's track,
Were terrors of the angry gloom.

In shrouding mist and darkness dun,
The piercing prow with crushing blow,
As swift as shot of mighty gun,
Deals death to friend as to a foe.

The walls of steel are broken glass,
The ocean's pride no more shall ride
The storm and gale; its shapeless mass,
The "dark unfathomed caves" shall hide.

The captain and his mate alone
Do guard the wreck—a fading speck,–
While fiendish Furies claim their own
And laugh and dance upon the deck.

The pistol shots and lights of blue,
The Captain gave across the wave,
Shall shine and echo ages through,
Immortal signals of the brave.

O shame! How feeble is the pen
That would portray the noble way
Which mate and captain showed to men
That hero souls are born today.

Oh! heroes are the salt that saves,–
The chosen few that life renew,
For man a higher level craves
From knowing what his kind can do.

FINIS

If I have won a friend
By what is written here,
I have achieved the end
The poet holds most dear.

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